bluestem

the cookbook

colby garrelts and megan garrelts

with bonjwing lee

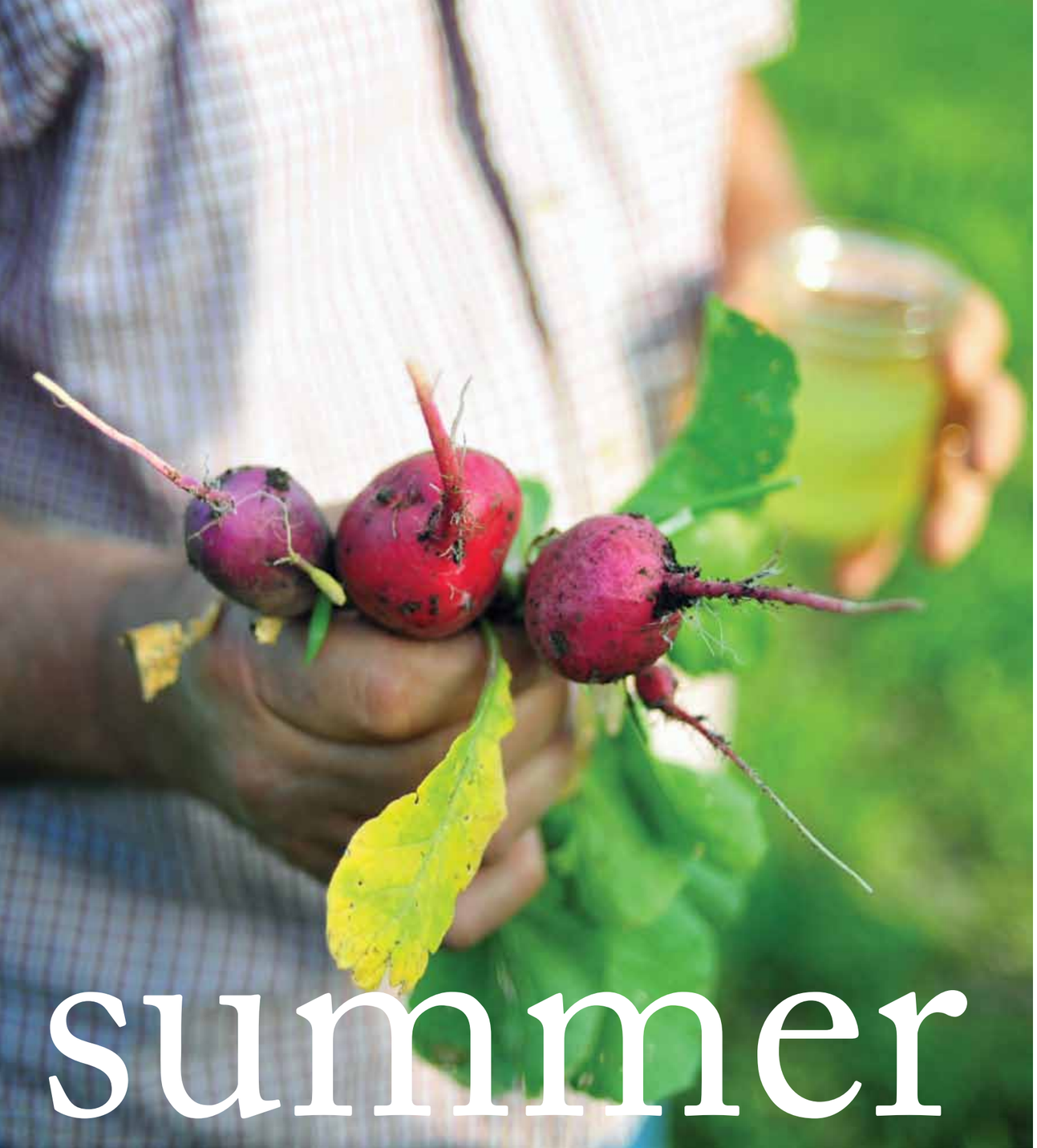
Bluestem is a stunning seasonal cookbook from James Beard–nominated chef Colby Garrelts and his wife, Megan Garrelts, owners of Kansas City's highly acclaimed Bluestem Restaurant.

A repeated nominee for the James Beard Award for "Best Chef: Midwest," chef Colby Garrelts and highly respected executive pastry chef Megan Garrelts offer their culinary techniques inside *Bluestem, The Cookbook.* From Warm Eggplant Salad and Potato-Crusted Halibut with Herb Cream to delectable desserts such as Honey Custard and Peanut Cream Fritters with Concord Grape Sauce, the Garreltses showcase local, Midwestern ingredients and artisanal producers through 100 seasonally driven recipes.

Including a full-meal lineup of recipes, from amuse-bouche to dessert, *Bluestem* offers helpful tips from a professional kitchen alongside seasonal wine notes and 100 full-color photographs that capture the simple beauty of Bluestem's composed dishes. Guided by their childhood memories and inspired by the world around them, the Garreltses offer a Midwestern sensibility while enabling cooks of all experience levels the opportunity of replicating Bluestem's contemporary taste and signature dishes at home.

contents

viii preface
xii foreword
xiv introduction
xx user manual, or how to use this cookbook, by someone who is not a chef
xxviii wine
1 spring
61 summer
127 autumn
191 winter
251 essentials
270 acknowledgments
272 sources
274 metric conversions and equivalents
276 index



summer

As chefs, we live for summer.

Owing to its length and intensity, summer in the Midwest is a celebration of abundance.

What doesn't grow here in any other season will probably grow—and grow prolifically—in the summer, when our region basically turns into a gigantic hothouse. At its best, summer is an assault of produce. Farmers' trucks crowd with watermelons, and farm stands overflow with tomatoes, squash, cherries, peppers, corn, peaches, melons, snap beans, potatoes, and countless greens—all of which you'll find on the menu at Bluestem.

In this season, we focus on lighter, cleaner flavors and simpler cooking techniques to highlight the natural flavors in the produce.

There are cold salads that call for little more than quick blanching (the snap beans on page 70 and marinated melons on page 76); stripped-down pastas with quickly cooked "sauces"; and uncomplicated, middle-American flavors, like catfish with tartar sauce (page 99), trout with summer beans (page 96), chicken with pistou (page 101), and pork with syrupy, glazed peaches (page 103).

And despite the often oppressive heat and humidity during summers in the Midwest, you'll never find us failing to exercise our God-given right to fire up our grills and smokers. So we've included a few dishes that will give you a reason to enjoy a few beers or cocktails on the patio while you wait for your coals to heat up.

summer menu

66 amuse-bouche

watermelon shots
sweet corn soup, maryland blue crab

70 cold

snap beans, speck, green dirt farm's cheese, champagne vinaigrette
gazpacho
marinated **melon**, tomato, tomato jam, saba, fennel, cilantro
braised **artichoke**, potatoes confit, german-style dressing
jonah crab, cucumber gelée, avocado
foie gras au torchon, bing cherry mostarda, crispy toast

86 hot

warm **eggplant** salad, caperberries, lemon vinaigrette
sausage, whiskey plums, toasted almonds

90 pasta

chitarra, tomatoes, chard
orecchiette, pattypan squash, brown butter, sage

93 water

poached **wild coho salmon**, champagne-trout roe vinaigrette, braised endive
trout, pistachio, summer beans, coriander butter sauce
catfish sticks, corn nuts

101 land

campo lindo **hen**, pistachio pesto
roasted **pork**, sweet and sour peaches
grilled wagyu **rib eye**, sweet corn, goat cheese, speck gratin

108 sweet

pleasant ridge reserve, tomato jam
chocolate sponge cake, bing cherries, cocoa foam, "popcorn" ice cream
stone fruit cobbler
honey custard, **mulberry**-pinot sorbet, linzer wafer cookies

119 petits fours

amarena **cherry** soda
malted **strawberry** macarons
banana-pineapple tea cake

wine notes

A chilled, dry rosé is the next best thing to air conditioning. On a hot, muggy summer day, a blushing Marsannay, for example, will help drop the temperature around any table. If it's summer, you can bet there's a bottle or two near me.

Rosés have gotten a bad reputation, one that I'm constantly trying to rewrite. They're fragrant with a good balance of acidity and tannins, and usually drier than you'd assume.

In this section, a nice rosé will pair well with the snap bean salad (page 70), picking up the brighter notes in the grassy greens and the tangy goat cheese, and highlight the more delicate flavors in the wild coho salmon recipe on page 93.

Colby's Gazpacho (page 72) is amazingly versatile. At Bluestem, we incorporate the gazpacho into a cocktail, shaking it with the vodka and pouring it into a frosty martini glass. Pairing wine with the gazpacho in the dining room is a little trickier. Because it is unusually acidic, the gazpacho tends to overpower most white wines. My solution: a high-quality, unfiltered junmai sake, which has a creamy texture and a fruity finish that complements the soup without being overwhelmed by it.

The tropical fruit flavors in a white wine from the French Rhône region will pair nicely with the sweet and sour peaches that Colby serves with the pork tenderloin on page 103. The fatty texture of a white Rhône will also hold up well against the meat.

Megan's mulberry-pinot noir sorbet (page 116), served with linzer torte cookies and a honey custard, will pair especially well with Brachetto d'Acqui, a sweet red wine from the Piedmont region of Italy. Effervescent and rosy, it tastes like an adult version of strawberry cream soda.

sweet corn soup, maryland blue crab

Serves 4

3 ears corn, husks and silk removed

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

Salt and freshly cracked black pepper

2 large shallots, finely chopped

4 cloves garlic, finely chopped

1 cup rye whiskey

½ cup dry white wine

Salt, to taste

1½ cups heavy cream

4 ounces jumbo lump crabmeat, picked over for shells and cartilage

Freshly squeezed lime juice, for garnish

Sweet corn is just about as abundant in the Midwest in the summer as blue crabs are along the Eastern coast of the United States. Every summer, Megan and I try our best to visit my relatives in Delaware. There's nothing I relish more than sitting out on the docks with a bib cracking freshly steamed crabs.

Fresh crabs are a luxury here in the Midwest, but once in a while, when I have a yen for the shore, I'll order some and pair them with corn freshly picked by our local farmers. Depending on how good you are at picking crabmeat, you'll need at least 2 pounds of whole live crabs to yield 4 ounces of meat. If you can't get fresh crabs, you can substitute unpasteurized crabmeat.

Rub the ears of corn with 1 tablespoon of butter to coat. Liberally season them with salt and pepper.

Over a preheated charcoal or gas grill, or directly on the open flame of a gas stove, roast the corn, rotating the ears every 20 seconds, until the kernels begin to char. When the kernels have developed an even speckling of black char spots, set the ears aside to cool.

Cut the kernels off the cobs and set them aside in a bowl. Working over a separate bowl, "milk" the cobs by running the back of your knife, while pressing against the corncobs, down the length of the cob. Reserve the liquid and discard the cobs.

In a medium saucepot, heat the remaining tablespoon of butter over medium-high heat. Add the shallots and garlic and sauté them for 1 minute. Stir in the corn and cook for 1 more minute. Add the rye whiskey, white wine, and reserved corn milk and season with salt and pepper to taste. Let the mixture simmer for 5 minutes. Add the cream, return to a simmer, and let the soup reduce for 10 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat and let it stand for 10 minutes to cool.

Carefully, pour the hot mixture into a blender. With one hand held firmly over the lid, puree the soup on high speed until smooth and liquefied, about 5 minutes. Strain the soup through a fine-mesh sieve or a double thickness of cheesecloth. Press down on the pulp with the back of a ladle or flat spoon to yield as much liquid as possible. Discard the pulp.

To serve, if the soup has cooled, reheat the soup in a small pot over medium-low heat. Divide the crabmeat among 4 small cups or bowls and pour about ¼ cup soup into each one. Garnish each serving with a dash of lime juice.

gazpacho

Serves 4

gazpacho

4 red bell peppers, cored and finely chopped

1 red onion, finely chopped

2 large cucumbers, finely chopped

6 cloves garlic, peeled

6 large tomatoes, coarsely chopped

Juice of 1 lemon

¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 cup red wine vinegar

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1½ teaspoons salt

Freshly cracked white pepper

gazpacho foam

3 cloves garlic, peeled

3 cups white grapes

1 cup blanched almonds

¼ cup champagne vinegar

½ cup water

½ cup heavy cream

Salt and freshly ground white pepper

garnishes

8 cherry tomatoes

8 seedless white grapes

1 radish, thinly sliced

Basil blossoms

This is a marriage of two Spanish cold soups: gazpacho—the often chunky puree of tomatoes, bell peppers, onions, and vinegar—and *ajo blanco*—a thick, white soup made by blending together bread, almonds, garlic, and oil.

To make this soup a little more refined for our restaurant, I strain the gazpacho to yield a clear broth and transform the *ajo blanco* into a foam, which I float over the soup right before sending it out to the table. The clear gazpacho broth also does double duty in a gazpacho martini, which we serve in our lounge (equal parts gazpacho and vodka). People seem to siphon it by the gallon.

Make the gazpacho: Line a colander with eight layers of cheesecloth (this can be one large sheet folded over eight times) and set it over a large, deep bowl.

Combine all of the gazpacho ingredients in a blender and puree until the contents are liquefied.

Strain the puree through the cheesecloth-lined colander. A clear gazpacho liquid should strain through to the bowl underneath. When most of the liquid has strained through, use the back of a ladle to push the pulp down to extract as much liquid as possible. Discard the pulp.

Stored tightly covered in the refrigerator, the gazpacho will keep for 3 days.

Make the gazpacho foam: Combine all of the ingredients in a blender and puree until liquefied.

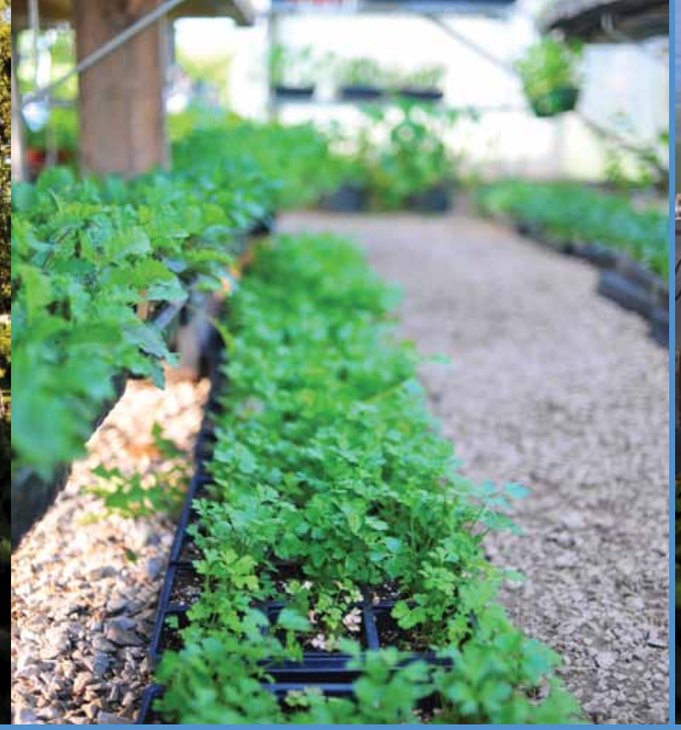
Pour the strained liquid into an iSi canister and charge it with a N_2O cartridge according to the manufacturer's instructions (see headnote on page 66). Chill the canister for at least 1 hour before discharging the contents.

If you don't have an iSi canister, you can omit the foam, or you may serve the blended foam ingredients in a separate bowl along with the clear gazpacho.

Blanch and peel the garnishes: Prepare an ice bath (see the User Manual, page xx). Bring a pot of water to a boil and blanch the cherry tomatoes for 30 seconds. Cool them immediately in the ice bath. Blanch the white grapes for 2 minutes (see the User Manual, page xx). The ice bath will not only stop the cooking process for the tomatoes and grapes but also help loosen the skin.

Carefully, peel the skins off of the tomatoes and grapes, leaving them whole.

To serve: Slice the grapes into thirds and halve the tomatoes lengthwise. Divide and arrange them in 4 soup bowls. Pour the gazpacho over the garnishes and discharge a large dollop of white gazpacho foam over the soup (or serve the blended ingredients in a separate bowl alongside to make a gazpacho duo). Serve immediately.



crum's heirlooms

She's one of the most passionate and emotional vegetable enthusiasts you'll ever meet: Set a ripe peach in front of Debbie and the world around her disappears. He's a diligent, no-complaints worker on a steady and even keel: Give Jim a watermelon and he'll spit out the rind and plant the seeds. Together, the Crums have become, to Kansas City's chefs, the beloved king and queen of summer.

The Crums spoil us. Thanks to them, we are less reliant upon and less interested in produce from outside our region.

tomatoes. lots of tomatoes.

It was an unexpected bumper crop in the summer of 2002 that got the couple thinking. Their son Dave, who was working as a chef in Minneapolis at the time (and who later became chef de cuisine at Bluestem), suggested that they sell them. And that's how Crum's Heirlooms was born.

What started as a small, ⅓-acre garden has now expanded to a 12-acre plot of land near Bonner Springs, Kansas, that is responsible for some of the finest organic produce in our area. It's taken on a life of its own, growing every year. Every summer there's something new and exciting happening at the farm. We are already anxiously anticipating their yield in the coming years.

Although both of them have daytime jobs—Debbie is a substitute teacher and Jim works in technology sales—the Crums always find energy to tend their farm. Taking full advantage of the long summer days, they squeeze every ounce of sunlight out of the sky and put it into their produce.

We feature the Crums' vegetables wherever and whenever possible. We're proud to share their beautiful bounty with our diners. Their heirloom tomatoes—for which they've become famous—are juicy and sweet (and come in more shapes, sizes, and colors than you can imagine). From them, we make a summer gazpacho (page 72) that's light and refreshing. Dave also developed a recipe for ketchup, which we serve—seemingly by the bowlful—in the lounge as a condiment for burgers and *pommes frites*. It's immensely popular.

The Crums bring dozens of varieties of carrots, beets, peppers, and radishes to the table as well. Spring onions, pearl onions, large onions—you name it, they grow it. At the height of summer, they shower us with baskets of squash blossoms, which we fill with goat cheese or scallop mousse and deep-fry. In the colder months, they keep us going with root vegetables, such as turnips and potatoes.

The couple now provides produce to more than 30 restaurants in Kansas City. Bluestem is lucky to be one of them.

marinated **melon**, tomato, tomato jam, saba, fennel, cilantro

Serves 4

pickled watermelon rind

4 cups watermelon rind trimmed of pink flesh and outer green skin and cut into 1-inch chunks

3 cups water

3 tablespoons salt

1 cup champagne vinegar

2 cups sugar

2 teaspoons coriander seeds

¼ teaspoon mustard seeds

1 small fennel bulb, trimmed and chopped

vinaigrette

¼ cup saba

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

tomatoes and melon

2 pounds heirloom tomatoes in assorted sizes, preferably golf ball–size or smaller

1 pound ripe melons (an assortment of watermelon, cantaloupe, and honeydew)

Sea salt and freshly cracked black pepper

¼ cup Tomato Jam (page 109)

Chopped fresh chives, basil blossoms, and mint leaves, for garnish

I grew up hating tomatoes, eggs, and milk. Although I'm still working on eggs, I eventually graduated to milk and the tomato. In fact, I now love tomatoes so much that I eat them plain with a dash of salt.

In the Midwest, when the tomatoes are good, they're exceptional. It's hard to justify doing anything to them at all. This salad brings them together with another Midwestern summer treasure: ripe melons, a fleshier and slightly sweeter counterpart to the acidic tomato. The presentation is particularly beautiful when you use a mismatched patchwork of different-colored tomatoes and melons.

Pickle the watermelon rind: Combine all of the ingredients for the pickled rind in a medium pot and bring to a boil over high heat until the liquid thickens into a light syrup. Lower the heat to medium and let the rinds simmer in the syrup for about 50 minutes, or until they soften and turn translucent. Remove the pot from the heat and let cool completely.

Make the vinaigrette: Whisk together the saba and olive oil.

Prepare the tomatoes and melons: Bring a pot of heavily salted water to a rolling boil. While the water is heating, prepare an ice bath (see the User Manual, page xx). Blanch the tomatoes in two batches for 10 seconds.

Drain, then cool them in an ice bath (for blanching instructions, see the User Manual, page xx). Carefully peel the skins off the tomatoes. Discard the skins and set the tomatoes aside.

Using a melon baller, scoop out 24 melon balls (at the restaurant, we use a ¼-inch melon baller, but a sturdy metal ¼-teaspoon measuring spoon will also work).

To serve: Season the melon balls and tomatoes with salt and pepper and toss them in some vinaigrette to coat.

Divide the pickled watermelon rinds and dressed tomatoes and melon balls among 4 plates. Dot each plate with a couple of teaspoons of tomato jam, and garnish the salad with the herbs. Serve immediately.

jonah crab, cucumber gelée, avocado

Serves 4

cucumber gelatin

2 cups cucumber juice (see box)

1 teaspoon powdered gelatin

Juice of 1 lime

2 tablespoons Tanqueray Rangpur (lime-flavored gin) or regular gin

1 teaspoon salt

crab salad

1 pound Jonah crabmeat, picked over for shells and cartilage

¼ cup Aioli (page 252)

2 teaspoons togarashi (Japanese seven-spice blend)

Salt and freshly ground white pepper

avocado

2 Hass avocados, pitted, peeled, and diced

Juice of ½ lime

Pinch of salt

Freshly ground white pepper

Edible flowers, for garnish (optional)

Let's be honest: There really isn't anything Midwestern about this dish. I mean, a Kansan making seafood salad is just about as irresponsible as a Carolinian making barbecue. Yet "seafood salads" make a regular appearance at summer outings. They're usually made with imitation crab, baby shrimp, and a lot of mayonnaise.

At Bluestem, we try to show that Midwesterners can make crab salad just as well as we make barbecue. Here is a more elegant version with sweet Jonah crabmeat set over a cucumber gelée and diced avocados. If you can't find Jonah crabmeat, you can use another unpasteurized lump crabmeat.

With its emerald green base of cucumber juice, this salad is particularly pretty when garnished with brightly colored edible flowers. You don't want to use anything too herbal or floral, so we suggest using impatiens, nasturtiums, pansies, and Johnny-jump-ups.

Make the cucumber gelatin: Put the cucumber juice, lime juice, and gin in a small saucepot. Sprinkle the gelatin powder over the juice and let it bloom for 5 minutes. Gently heat the cucumber juice over low heat, stirring the gelatin until it completely dissolves. You only want to warm the juice enough to dissolve the gelatin, not heat it.

Divide the juice among 4 small, shallow bowls. Set them on a level shelf in the refrigerator and chill them for 2 hours, or until the gelatin has set.

Make the crab salad: Toss the crabmeat with the aioli and togarashi. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Prepare the avocado: Gently toss the avocado with the lime juice, salt, and pepper.

To serve: Remove the chilled bowls of gelatin from the refrigerator. Mound one-quarter of the crab salad onto the center of each bowl of gelatin. Garnish each salad with the diced avocado and edible flowers. Serve immediately.

green

To get a dark, emerald green color for the cucumber gelatin, juice the cucumbers with the skin on. However, make sure you are using cucumbers that have not been waxed.

chitarra, tomatoes, chard

Serves 4

2 tablespoons olive oil

8 ounces cherry tomatoes

12 ounces chitarra pasta

3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

8 ounces young Swiss chard, leaves and stems separated and chopped

2 tablespoons white wine

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 ounces goat cheese

Tomatoes! Tomatoes! Tomatoes!

Some summers, we get more than we could dream of using. It's an onslaught most desired. Other summers, they come and go in a blink of an eye, plagued by too much rain or fungal growth or ruined by unseasonably cool temperatures.

This recipe is stripped down and simple, an ideal showcase for great summer produce. You can use any fleshy green-leaf vegetable instead of chard. The important thing is that you use something fresh, with good natural flavor. If you cannot find *pasta alla chitarra*, which is similar to spaghetti except that the strands are square instead of round, substitute regular spaghetti.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a large sauté pan over high heat. When the oil is smoking hot, add the tomatoes. They will blister immediately. Shake the pan to roll the tomatoes around until they're blistered all over, less than 30 seconds. Transfer the tomatoes from the pan to a plate.

Bring a large stockpot of water to a rolling boil over high heat. Heavily salt the water, stirring it in to dissolve it. Cook the pasta until just short of tender—you will cook the pasta a little more with the chard. Drain the pasta, reserving a bit more than ¼ cup of the pasta water, and set the pasta aside, keeping it warm.

Heat the remaining tablespoon of oil in the sauté pan over low heat. Add the garlic and chard stems and cook until they start to turn translucent, about 1 minute. Stir in the chard leaves, ¼ cup of the reserved pasta water, and the wine and continue to cook until the greens have wilted, about 1 minute. Add the pasta, tossing to coat, and then the tomatoes. Add a bit more reserved pasta water to keep the pasta moist, if necessary, and let it simmer for 30 seconds. Season with salt and black pepper to taste.

Divide the pasta and vegetables among 4 bowls, top each with some goat cheese, and serve immediately.

roasted **pork**, sweet and sour peaches

Serves 4

sweet and sour peaches

2 tablespoons grape seed oil

4 firm but ripe peaches, halved and pitted

2 young onion bulbs (or small white onions), sliced ½ inch thick

2 scallions, halved lengthwise

1½ cups bourbon

1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

¾ cup sherry vinegar

½ cup Madeira

½ cup honey

1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper

5 cardamom pods

pork

2 tablespoons salt

1 tablespoon brown sugar

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

½ teaspoon chili powder

⅛ teaspoon paprika

½ teaspoon garlic salt

4 double-cut pork loin chops, attached in rack form and trussed

2 tablespoons grape seed oil

I usually have one main course on the summer menu that casually nods toward barbecue, which is an integral part of our local culture. Kansas City barbecue relies on a combination of sweetness, smokiness, and spicy heat, with just a touch of acidity to balance it all out. You'll find all of these flavors in the sweet and sour peaches that accompany the pork.

Admittedly, the portion size and rusticity of these bone-in, double-cut pork chops wouldn't make them appropriate for our restaurant's multicourse menu. For a more elegant presentation, you can slice the meat off the bone and serve the slices alongside the peaches.

Cook the peaches and onions: Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat.

Place the peaches, onion slices, and scallions, cut side down, in the skillet. Griddle them until the peaches and onions caramelize and the scallions have just begun to soften, turning the onions and scallions as needed, about 20 minutes. Remove the skillet from the heat and transfer the peaches, onions, and scallions to a plate.

the pits

To pit peaches, halve the peach along its seam. The peach will open with the pit lying flat, making it much easier to lever it out with a paring knife.

Make the sweet and sour glaze: Bring the bourbon, orange juice, vinegar, Madeira, honey, vinegar, pepper, and cardamom to a simmer in a large saucepan over high heat. Lower the heat to medium to maintain a gentle simmer and reduce the sauce until it is thick and syrupy, about 1 hour.

Cook the pork: Preheat the oven to 425°F.

Combine the salt, brown sugar, pepper, chili powder, paprika, and garlic salt in a small bowl. Rub the seasoning mix over the pork, coating the meat generously with all of it.

Heat the grape seed oil in a large skillet over high heat. When the oil begins to shimmer, brown the rack of pork, turning the meat often to prevent the rub from burning.

Place the browned rack of pork, with the bones pointing upward, on a rack set over a roasting pan. Roast the meat

in the oven for 25 minutes for a slightly pink interior. Let the meat rest for at least 15 minutes.

Glaze the peaches and onions: Bring the reduced sauce to a gentle simmer in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the peaches and onions—but not the scallions—and let them cook in the sauce, which should thicken and bubble, for a couple of minutes. Turn the onions and peaches over to coat them with the saucy glaze.

To serve: Cut the pork rack into 4 equal-size "chops."

Transfer the glazed peaches, onions, and scallions from the skillet to 4 plates. Drizzle some of the syrup over and around them. Serve them with the pork chops.

NOTES: While it's perfectly acceptable to brine pork tenderloins, I don't think it's necessary. Either have the butcher truss the loin or truss the loin yourself. Trussing will give it a nice shape and ensure more even cooking.

Don't be afraid to use dry seasonings to make rubs for large pieces of meat. In the Midwest, dry seasonings are an integral part of the way our barbecue tastes.

honey custard, **mulberry**-pinot sorbet, linzer wafer cookies

Serves 4

1 cup heavy cream
1 cup whole milk
4 egg yolks
2 whole eggs
3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon dark brown sugar
4 teaspoons honey
Mulberry-Pinot Sorbet (recipe follows)
Linzer Wafer Cookies (recipe follows)

This is my riff on the Linzer torte, an Austrian tart known by its lattice top. Here, hazelnut cookies stand in for the nut crust; mulberries replace the traditional fruit fillings—red currant or apricot—and honey custard, with its mellow sweetness, gives it all a creamy body.

You can also serve any of the components—cookies, sorbet, or custard—individually as a simple, after-meal sweet.

Preheat the oven to 300°F.

Combine the cream and milk in a small saucepot. Scald the mixture over medium-high heat (bring it to just under a boil). Remove from the heat and set aside.

Whisk together the egg yolks, eggs, brown sugar, and honey in a large bowl, breaking up any lumps of brown sugar as you work.

Slowly pour the hot cream in a thin, steady stream into the egg mixture to temper the eggs. If you pour the cream in too quickly, you will scramble the eggs. Strain the custard base through a fine-mesh sieve.

Divide the custard among four 4-ounce ovenproof ramekins. Put the ramekins in a large baking dish that is deeper than the ramekins (the tops of the ramekins should be below the top of the baking dish). Pour enough water into the pan around the ramekins so that it rises halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Try not to splash any water into the custard. Cover the baking dish with aluminum foil and bake the custard for 40 minutes, opening the foil every 10 minutes to release some of the steam. Be very careful when you open the foil, as the rush of steam can burn you. The custards are done when they are firm to the touch but still slightly jiggly in the middle. Transfer to a wire rack and let the custards cool to room temperature. Chill the cooled custards overnight before serving.

To serve, top each chilled custard with a scoop of the sorbet. Serve the wafer cookies on the side.

mulberry-pinot sorbet Makes 1 quart

When I worked in Los Angeles, I found the most wonderful mulberries at the Santa Monica Farmers' Market. They were in such high demand that I had to get to the market extra early just to be able to grab a few cartons. They were so sweet that we served them simply with some whipped cream.

In Missouri, summer mulberries are hard to find, and so they are quite a treat when they turn up. They're not nearly as sweet as those California ones I loved so much, so I give them some extra oomph by adding pinot noir to this sorbet.

- 1 pint mulberries
- 1½ cups water
- 1½ cups sugar
- ⅓ cup pinot noir or any fruit juice (optional)
- Juice of ½ lemon

Bring the berries, water, and sugar to a rapid boil in a small pot over medium heat. Remove from the heat. Carefully transfer the hot mixture to a blender and puree. Strain the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve.

Whisk in the wine and lemon juice.

Freeze the sorbet base in an ice cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions. (This may require chilling the base before churning.)

linzer wafer cookies Makes about 3 dozen 2½-inch cookies

- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- ⅓ cup hazelnuts, toasted and finely ground (about 3 ounces)
- Cinnamon Sugar (page 265)

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. You can bake 2 sheets at a time, rotating them halfway through.

In a bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, sugar, and vanilla together on medium-high speed until the butter is pale and fluffy, about 8 minutes. Scrape down the bowl with a spatula.

With the stand mixer set on medium speed, add the egg, scraping the bowl down as needed. With the mixer on low speed, add the flour mixture. Scrape the bowl down again and add the ground hazelnuts. Continue mixing until the nuts are fully incorporated, forming a soft, sticky dough.

Divide the dough in half and form each half into a flat round. Wrap the rounds separately in plastic wrap. If you are making the cookies the same day you intend to serve them, freeze the dough for at least 30 minutes. If you are making the dough a day ahead, chill the dough overnight in the refrigerator. Wrapped tightly in two or three layers of plastic wrap, the dough will keep in the freezer for up to 1 month.

Roll one round of the chilled dough out to about a ⅛-inch thickness and cut into shapes as desired. The dough is quite sticky, so dust your board and rolling pin generously with flour. Repeat with the second dough round, if desired.

Arrange the cut cookies on the prepared baking sheet, leaving at least ½ inch between them. Dust the cookies with cinnamon sugar and bake for 8 to 10 minutes, until they are turning just lightly golden brown. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Stored in an airtight container, the cookies will keep up to 1 week.

malted **strawberry** macarons

Makes about 30 macarons

2 tablespoons malt powder

1¼ cup confectioners' sugar

1½ cup plus 2 tablespoons almond flour

3 egg whites

¼ cup granulated sugar

Pinch of salt

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Strawberry Buttercream (recipe follows)

I adore Sophia Coppola's film *Marie Antoinette*, which drops that ill-fated queen of France into a music video–meets–candy land court of haute couture. As a woman and a pastry chef, I gleefully imagine being smothered along with her in that scene with the mountains of petticoats and petits fours.

Macarons are the Marie Antoinette, the *divas au courant* of the pastry world. Á la mode and fashionable, these almond meringue buttons are the ultimate designer cookie sandwich. Filled with buttercream or jam, they now dot high-end patisserie window displays with vibrant colors from Paris to Tokyo.

Macarons are extremely delicate. Due to their sensitivity to moisture, they are best eaten the day they are filled, though unfilled *macarons* will keep for a couple of days in an airtight container.

Here, I merge the form of the French meringue cookie with the flavors of the American soda fountain.

Preheat the oven to 300°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a nonstick baking mat.

Sift the malt powder and confectioners' sugar together into a large bowl. Add the almond flour. Set aside.

In a clean, dry bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, whip the egg whites on medium-high speed until frothy, about 2 minutes. Continue whipping, adding the sugar and salt gradually in a steady stream, until medium-stiff peaks form (the tops of the peaks should hold their shape after leaning to one side, as opposed to stiff peaks, which will stand straight up).

Fold half of the dry ingredients into the whipped egg whites. Add the vanilla extract and fold in the remaining dry ingredients. Lightly rap the bowl against the counter to remove any air pockets.

Transfer the meringue to a pastry bag fitted with a plain tip (preferably a #4 tip). Pipe the meringue onto the lined baking sheet in quarter-size mounds about ½ inch apart. Bake the *macarons* for 10 minutes, rotating the baking sheet once halfway through baking.

Remove the *macarons* from the oven and allow them to cool. Carefully slip a metal spatula under each cookie to remove it from the liner.

Pipe about 1 tablespoon of buttercream onto the bottom (flat side) of a *macaron* cookie and top it with another cookie, bottom-side down, to make a mini cookie sandwich. These are best served the day they are made, so only pipe as many sandwiches as you plan to consume that day. You can store the unfilled cookies in an airtight container wrapped in multiple layers of plastic wrap in the refrigerator for up to 1 week. Let them come to room temperature before filling them with buttercream.

strawberry buttercream Makes about 2½ cups

This pretty, pink buttercream has an incredibly smooth, satiny finish. When whipped properly, it's extremely light and fluffy, making it perfect for summertime desserts. This buttercream is also extremely versatile. At the restaurant, I use it to frost cakes and fill *macarons*; at weekend teas, I even serve it plain alongside warm scones. Although it is best used and eaten the day it's made, I've included instructions for storing the buttercream for later use.

- 3 egg whites
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (2¼ sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ cup Strawberry Jam (or more or less according to your taste; recipe follows)

In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the egg whites and sugar. Set the bowl over a saucepot with about 1 inch of simmering water in the bottom. Gently whisk the mixture until the sugar dissolves, about 3 minutes. Remove the bowl from the simmering saucepot. Using a handheld mixer or a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, whip the heated egg whites and sugar on high speed until stiff peaks form, about 5 minutes. It should look very glossy, like soft marshmallow crème.

With the mixer on medium speed, slowly add tablespoon-size pieces of butter to the meringue, allowing each to disappear before adding the next. The meringue will break and turn to liquid form, but then it will re-whip into a thick buttercream. Once all the butter has been added, add the vanilla and whip the buttercream on high speed for 1 minute more.

Fold in the strawberry jam by hand.

If you are not using the buttercream the same day, transfer it to an airtight container and freeze it for up to 1 month. When you are ready to use the buttercream, let it thaw completely and re-whip it in a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment until soft and fluffy.

strawberry jam Makes ½ cup

- 1½ teaspoons dry pectin
- ¾ cup sugar
- 8 ounces strawberries, hulled and quartered
- ½ vanilla bean, split and scraped
- 1 teaspoon brandy
- ¼ cup water

Sift together the pectin and ½ cup of the sugar. Set aside.

Bring the strawberries, remaining ¼ cup of sugar, vanilla, and brandy to a simmer in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Continue cooking until the strawberries begin to break down and the mixture starts to bubble.

Meanwhile, prepare a large ice bath (see the User Manual, page xx).

Add the sifted pectin and sugar to the simmering strawberry mixture along with the water. Bring the mixture to a rapid boil over high heat. Remove the jam from the heat and transfer it to a nonreactive bowl. Place the bowl over the ice bath, whisking occasionally to help the mixture cool. Transfer the cooled jam to an airtight container. Sealed tightly, it will keep in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

Colby and **Megan** Garrelts

met in the kitchen of Chicago's Tru, where they worked for chefs Rick Tramonto and Gale Gand. After working in kitchens in Las Vegas and Los Angeles, the couple returned to Colby's hometown of Kansas City in 2004 to open Bluestem, a fine-dining restaurant. Bluestem has garnered both local and national acclaim for its progressive American cuisine. Colby was named one of *Food & Wine* magazine's Best New Chefs in 2005, and has received five James Beard Award nominations. The Garreltses live in Leawood, Kansas, with their children, Madilyn and Colin, and their furry dependents, Molly, Paige, and Nina.

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